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Wasting The Joy of Life

Public School Music Emphasized Too Little

By DR. A. E. WINSHIP.

Decries Lack of Attention to One of the Greatest Forces in Human Life.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: From the Springfield Republican of August 5, 1915, we quote the report of an address which will give us the right tone for our year's work. It is quite in tune with Dr. Winship's fine address at our Minneapolis Conference in 1914, which was printed in the volume of our Proceedings.—P. W. D.)

Dr. A. E. Winship of Boston, editor of the *Journal of Education*, speaking recently before the Michigan music teachers' association at Detroit, pleaded vigorously and with conviction for more thorough musical training in the public schools. Also he expressed disgust with present conditions in this regard and with the attitude of school heads. He said in part: We must first, last and all the time insist—you as musicians, and others as educators—that music is an educational essential not to be neglected by the teacher because other school activities are more insistent, not to be abandoned because the taxpayer's pocket squeals.

Music is as real in its service to humanity as the multiplication table. Why does a boy whistle when he needs heart? Why did the soldier boys sing "Dixie" or "Marching Through Georgia" when there was danger of overmuch thinking of "Home, Sweet Home," or of the picture of the morrow's carnage? Why doesn't the boy repeat the multiplication table? Why didn't the soldiers have a spelling match? When you need music you need it more than you need the list of irregular verbs.

Why has every evangelist had his Sankey, Alexander or Excel to warm up the audience until the blood tingled and thrilled like the springtime sentiment of youth? Why not start a revival with a recitation in definitions? Why are social reformers so afraid of the cabaret? Why is it that music sets the brain a-whirling, the heart a-throbbing, the feet a-going? Why is it that music possesses the soul of most people as nothing else does? Is it because it is a non-essential, a side issue, a trifling incident in one's life? Is it so unimportant in life, in war and politics, in love and religion that it has no place in education?

For good or ill, music is one of the greatest forces in human life, individually and collectively. All pretense to educate without music is like pretending to be rapturously happy while wrinkling the face with scowls and frowns and clogging the voice with wrath or hate. Music is the smile of education.

Music Stays With the Child As Do Few Other Lessons.

Music when rightly taught and practiced gets into the life of boys and girls and stays there into manhood and womanhood as does nothing else in the school. It is not vo-

cational, like typewriting for girls and agriculture for boys, but nothing makes for culture more than music, woven into one's being, whether in rendition or merely in appreciation. Music has not had adequate recognition because some people do not sing or play the violin. We have been too ready to assume that the schools should do nothing for any child that it does not do for all children, but although we have broken down that barrier in all industrial lines, we have made no concession as relates to music.

Rhythm is for all children. No youth is such a blunderer that he will not soon learn to keep step if he is in a military company. No normal child is incapable of getting the beauty and the physical and mental effect of rhythm. Not all will get the intellectual stimulus of harmony, but there will be as many children who get the personal advantage of harmony in music as of the artistic effect of a masterpiece in poetry and more than will get any sense of the essayist's art. We insist upon the study of English literature in every grade by every child, knowing that to some it is only the rhythm and the melody that appeal. There is as much profit intellectually and morally and more esthetically in the study of rhythm, melody and harmony in music as in language.

One of the difficult problems in public education is to find a way to have young people continue their studies after the compulsory school days are over. Musical aspiration and inspiration have been ruthlessly sent to the junk heap, while we have played every trick of the bunco steerers to corral the blacksmiths and the farmers.

Why? In some cases it has been due to the decision of those whose hands domineer over their hearts. If numbers are worth while, if the prevention of wrecks by the educational wayside is worth while then let us bait the sweet singer and the more sweet harpist as well as the toiler; while we make some non-bookish youth handy, let us make other artists with voice or instrument. But we are promptly met with the statement that it is too expensive. It is a luxury, it requires too much specialized work, that the public cannot afford to train individuals, that we cannot have pianos for public school pupils.

It will be slow work to educate the public to supply pianos for student practice. I think Cincinnati is launching upon this career, but there are not many cities with a Condon and such a board of education as Cincinnati enjoys. But, desirable as this would be, sure as it is to come, sometime, it is not necessary. All that is needed is to give school time for such extra privileges at private expense with full school credits, with privileges of substitution for subjects for which students have no taste, no talent, no use in any way.

Thousands of girls and boys in America are taking private music lessons for which parents are willing to pay. But neither parents nor children are content to have merely a musical education. They would like three-fourths high school life and one-fourth music, but with things as they are in most cities, the student must either give up the three-fourths that she wants in school or the one-fourth that she wants out of school.

The Three Alternatives of the High School Student.

One of three things happens. She gives up the high school to study music, and goes through life regretting that she has no diploma, no general education, no possibility of a college education; or she gives up music and goes to the high school and gets her diploma and goes through life regretting that she has not a musical education; or she goes to the high school and keeps on with her music and does nothing creditable with either.

With the present and past relation of the public school to music in most cities, a musically talented student can do nothing that is satisfactory or creditable. The present condition impeaches the wisdom, the common sense, the humanitarianism of everyone who is responsible for its continuance. Many cities like Cincinnati, Fitchburg, Quincy and Beverly allow a student to do one-half of his work in a shop taught by a man who has never given any thought to the art or science of teaching, and the school board does not elect him as a teacher, does not pay him as a teacher, does not have any control over him as a teacher.

In the best commercial depart-

ments of high schools and normal schools students are sent out, often many miles, to work for a few weeks in offices or counting rooms with untrained and unsupervised men or women who are not selected by the school officials or paid by them. In all such cases of industrial or commercial part-time work such opportunity is eagerly sought by school authorities because the work is so much better adapted to their needs than it can be in the school or by the school people. There is no conceivable argument against the music credit system except the time-dishonored dislike of anything for changing the conditions that we have inherited.

Justice to the individual, consideration for the community, appreciation of the good of the school all demand that music be given full opportunity in school, and through skilful outside teaching and practice. We must give the student the advantage of as much school life as he cares for and as much music training as he needs. Every consideration demands that the mischievous conditions of the past shall cease at once. It is about the only great advance step ever taken that does not increase the financial budget.

The Music Section of the N. E. A.

By LOUIS MOHLEN, Columbia University, N. Y.

The National Educational Association held in New York City, July 1 to 8 inclusive, has passed into history as a very satisfactory event. In this great association with its included organizations, each centering about some certain subject, it is believed that none of these was more

distinctive in itself, as to a pointed professional significance, than that of the Music Section which held its sessions in the new Auditorium of Hunter College.

When we consider the success of these sessions, we should seek to know how this success was brought